



## 2020 IRTPO Transportation Alternatives Grant Prospectus

See last page of this application for submittal instructions and links to grant information. **Application Due Date: Thursday, March 12, 2020.**

**Agency/Sponsor:** Island RTPO

**Project Title/STIP ID:** Island County Passenger Ferry Feasibility Analysis

**Project Description:** An analysis of the feasibility of a passenger-only ferry service from Island County to adjacent islands and the mainland.

**Improvement Type:** 18, 19, 26, 28

**Functional Class (Road Projects):** N/A

### Other Project Information:

Road name or number: N/A

Begin Termini: Countywide + End Termini: Countywide + Length (mi):

ROW Required: Yes ☐ No ☐ Environmental Type: N/A

Agency Project ID:  Priority #:

Utility Codes: Cable ☐ Power ☐ Water ☐ Gas ☐ Sewer ☐ Phone ☐ Other ☐

**Total Estimated Cost:** \$  **STBG Funds Requested:** \$

**Phase Estimates:** \$  PE \$  ROW \$  CN \$50,000 Planning

### TIP Information:

Hearing  Adoption  Amendment  Resolution #

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### Extended Project Description:

With funding for the Washington State Ferries limiting expansion, lack of extra vessels to cover when regular vessels are docked for emergency maintenance, and existing drive-on ferries aging out, Island RTPO is interested in identifying water travel alternatives for its residents and visitors. With only one bridge access connecting either island to the mainland, this is an emergency management issue as well as a tourism and everyday commuting issue.

Additionally, there is no direct connection between Camano and Whidbey Island for those commuting between the two for jury duty, work, or visits.

This study proposes to look into six major areas:

- 1) Existing and potential terminal locations on Whidbey Island, Camano Island, and the Everett area. This would include a) A review of existing facilities and their condition, b) a shoreline analysis of potential sites with associated landside road/transit connections, c) coordination with Island County long range planning related to the Shoreline Master Program update;
- 2) Review of potential private ferry service provider or agencies willing to administer new ferry services (for instance: Hat Island Ferry, Port of Everett);
- 3) Review of boat types and boat builders capable of delivering the needed vessels. This would include a) Design analysis related to identified need, b) cost analysis, c) timeline for delivery, d) accessibility of vessel design and landside facilities;
- 4) Coordination with Puget Sound Regional Council's Passenger-Only Ferry Study and review of data gathered among the twelve counties addressed;
- 5) Coordination with tourism agencies in Island County. This would include Whidbey Scenic Isle Way, Chambers of Commerce, and the Economic Development Council;
- 6) Coordination with transit agencies related to connectivity and partnership;
- 7) Coordination with Island County Department of Emergency Management;
- 8) Funding Options. This could include some combination of grants, local agency partnerships, user fees, property taxes or Transportation Benefit District sales taxes, or another funding type as yet undefined.

Project outcome would be a study that discusses all of the above major elements and offers recommendations and next steps.

### Summary of Project Benefits:

1. Understanding of current and latent need for passenger ferry service to and from Island County for jobs, medical appointments, shopping, school, and tourism.
2. Overview of potential location and feasibility of landside facility locations.
3. Mapping of potential routes.
4. Analysis of connectivity with transit and travel routes (vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian).



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5. Understanding of available service providers and/or vessel and staff needs in establishing a new service.
6. Strategies for moving forward (next steps).

**Project Specific Vicinity Map Attached:** ☐ Yes ☒ Not Applicable

Project area is countywide, with consideration of adjacent mainland and other islands.

### Local Project Approval:

TA Project Prospectus prepared under the supervision of:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William E. Oakes, PE, Island County Engineer

3/11/2020  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Agency/Sponsor Contact Information:

Contact Person: Susan Driver, IRTPO Transportation Planner  
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Mailing Address:	<u>Island County Public Works</u>	<i>Name/Dept.</i>
	<u>Attn: Transportation Planner</u>	
	<u>PO Box 5000</u>	<i>Street/PO Box</i>
	<u>Coupeville, WA</u>	<i>City, State</i>
	<u>98239</u>	<i>Zip Code</i>

### Island RTPO Final Priority Ranking:

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Project Rating Criteria

### 1 Preservation

8pts

N/A

### 2 Stewardship

8pts

The Puget Sound area is constantly struggling with roadway capacity issues and funding for long-term maintenance. The opportunity for commuters to use ferries and alternative modes (bicycle / pedestrian), reduces congestion on the roadways and minimizes greenhouse gas impacts. Finding ways to use current technology such as lighter vessel materials and hybrid-electric propulsion to reduce impacts on the environment.

### 3 Access\*

8pts

The study will result in recommendations for additional ferry services and multi-modal connectivity (transit, bike/ped, park & ride) between Island County and adjacent counties and mainland Puget Sound. Landside connections will be assessed and recommendations included. The study would address connections with transit and multi-modal travel routes.

### 4 Mobility

8pts

The study will result in recommendations for additional ferry services and multi-modal connectivity (transit, bike/ped, park & ride) between Island County and adjacent counties and mainland Puget Sound, maximizing people-moving capacity. Because it is advocating passenger-only ferries, it will reduce congestion by helping to take vehicles off of the roadways. The study would address additional service between Port Townsend and Coupeville, and ways to improve passenger connectivity given the rapidly increasing freight usage of this route as an I-5 Corridor bypass.

### 5 Economic Vitality

8pts

Additional passenger-only ferry service is expected to promote economic vitality by encouraging tourism to the islands and providing more and better opportunities for those commuting to jobs off of the island. The study will more closely define potential economic impacts.

### 6 Equity\*

8pts

The study will address ferry facilities and access for all abilities. It will also address the topic of shift-work commuting for low-income workers.

### 7 Safety

8pts

In general, less vehicles on the road, should reduce the number of collisions. Additional ferry availability can be utilized by local, state, and federal agencies as needed to evacuate people or bring in supplies in case of an emergency.

### 8 Environment

8pts

Providing alternatives to drive-alone commuting reduces fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas impacts. The study will also address the potential for hybrid vessels. Smaller, hybrid vessels are quieter and produce less over-water shadowing which minimize impacts to sea life. Encouraging commuters to bicycle and walk also produces healthier communities.

### 9 Planning Consistency\*

8pts

This study will be an extension of the IRTPO Regional Transportation Plan and Human Services Transportation Plan, that address multi-modal transportation opportunities for users of all abilities. The importance of ferries is also addressed in the Whidbey Scenic Isle Way Plan and the Island County Comprehensive Plan.



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### Project Rating Criteria

#### 10 Opportunities & Partnerships\*

8pts

Potential partners include Island County, the Port of South Whidbey, the City of Langley, the Port of Coupeville, the Town of Coupeville, the City of Oak Harbor, Whidbey Naval Air Station, the City of Port Townsend, Jefferson County, Peninsula RTPO, San Juan County, Skagit Council of Governments, The City of Anacortes, Whatcom Council of Governments, The City of Bellingham.

### Additional Project Information

#### 1. Project Status:

- a) Fulfills the recommendation of existing plan(s)? ☒ Yes ☐ No
  - i) Plan title(s) & years: IRTPO Regional Transportation Plan  
Strategic Action Item, 2019; Island County Comprehensive  
Plan, 2016
- b) Estimated timeline (month/year): Start: October 2020 Finish: June 2021

#### 2. Cost Estimates:

- a) Percent of P.E. completed: N/A
- b) Date cost estimates prepared: February 2020
- c) Source of information for developing cost estimates: Comparison of other studies & experience
- d) Source of matching funds: N/A
- e) Biological Assessment (BA): N/A

#### 3. Site Evaluation: N/A – part of assessment

#### 4. Right of Way Acquisition: N/A – part of assessment

#### 5. Indicate known significant public support or opposition:

This project has significant support from the North Sound Transportation Alliance, Island County Commissioners, the Port of South Whidbey, the City of Langley, adjacent county elected officials, and State elected officials.

#### 6. Explain how project complies with the American's with Disabilities Act.

This project is a feasibility study only. Study elements will address landside access for persons with disabilities, as well as accessible design of vessels proposed to be used or built for the service.

